

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:592
ANSWERED ON:16.08.2007
SHORTAGE OF RIGS
Veerendra Kumar Shri M.P.

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether oil exploration companies which have been awarded blocks for exploration in recent years could not take up the exploration work due to non-availability of rigs;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the time by which exploration work is likely to be started; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to overcome shortage of rigs?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL)

(a) to (d): The scarcity of offshore rigs in the international market has impacted drilling commitments in many exploration blocks.

The following measures have been taken to address the unforeseen situation of non-availability of offshore rigs in the international market:

- (i) Govt. issued policy guidelines in June, 2007 for merger of exploration periods of phases-I & II of NELP-III & IV offshore blocks into a new phase to be called as phase-I and to merge the minimum work programme of phase-II & III to be called phase-II.
- (ii) Rig sharing between operators for jointly hiring and sharing rig resources introduced in East Coast on pilot basis.